The Seed Sower.

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Sleep no More.

Sleep no more: the night is past,
Lo, the day is dawning fast.
Up and act! the die is cast,
Destiny is at thy door:
Sleep no more.

Sleep no more: those sluggard dreams
Little suit these morning beams.
Lo, on thee God's glory gleams!
See the sunbeam on the floor:
Sleep no more.

Sleep no more: by lord of chance
Wield the helm of circumstance.
Heaven's above thee, upward glance!
God behind thee and before:
Sleep no more.

Sleep no more: for life is brief,
Soon shall lapse the yellowed leaf.
Sow in spring, the autumn sheaf
Gather for thy winter store:
Sleep no more.

Sleep no more: when day is done,
Westering shall glow thy sun.
Up! a heaven is to be won,
When the soul on that still shore
Sleeps no more.

—ROBERT WILSON.

National Peace.

A SERMON PREACHED ON THANKSGIVING SUNDAY, JUNE 8TH, BY THE REV. JOSEPH WOOD.

Isaiah ii., 4.

When last Sunday the news flashed along the wires of the signing of the Treaty of Peace a great and oppressive burden was lifted from every heart. It seemed almost too good to be true. Expectation of the end had been so many times disappointed that while we allowed ourselves to hope, we felt it wise to prepare ourselves to have our hope falsified. Never did the telegraph bring a more welcome message than of that midnight scene in Pretoria, when Boer and Briton signed together what we trust will be a lasting covenant of amity and goodwill. There were many who, when the news reached them, could only say, with full heart and trembling lip, "Thank God!" Intense gladness thrilled the whole community. For nearly three years we have been living under the dark shadow of one of the most trying, and in some respects, most disastrous wars in which we have ever been engaged. It has been a time of storm and stress, not only for those engaged on the field of battle, but for those who remained at home. We call to mind the 22,000 and more of our bravest and best, in the prime

of their manhood, who, since the first shot in the autumn of '99, have found an African grave; we remember those anxious days and sleepless nights when, in the black times of Magersfontein and of Colenso, the British citizen seemed to feel the Empire rocking to its base, and the subsequent tangled history of defeat and success, of long-drawn heroic resistance, and of weary waiting for an end that never seemed to get nearer. At last our arms have been victorious; but at what an expenditure of blood and treasure! How many darkened homes and bleeding hearts are there in England to-day mourning the loss of dear and brave ones now quiet beneath the sod of the veldt? Alas! unless we ourselves are touched by the death of some son or brother, how little we think of the price of victory in precious human lives! But among the heroic features in the character of a great people or a great commander, none, except the sense of duty, is grander than sorrow for the fallen in the midst of battle. On the day after Waterloo, Wellington wrote: "The losses we have sustained have quite broken me down, and I have no feeling for the advantage we have acquired. The glory resulting from such actions, so dearly bought, is no consolation to me." Then the war has tried us in other ways—sundering friendships, causing divisions in the same household, stirring up passions almost as vindictive as those of the battle field. And so for many reasons the news of peace gives immense relief. It puts an end to a long period of anxiety, suffering, loss, and ill-feeling. It brings ease and comfort to many an aching heart. It relieves the country from a strain which, indeed, it has nobly borne, but which was a strain both on its resources and its endurance; and it ushers in, we devoutly pray, a better understanding between two races of brave and dogged men, with many features of character in common, such as tenacity of purpose, a deep-seated religiousness, self-sacrificing and patriotic devotion—races who may yet be reconciled to living under one flag by the recollection that they are sprung from one common stock. With our countrymen all the world over we join to-day in humble thanksgiving to the Great Giver of All Good that the waste, and miseries, and passions of war have given place to the counsels of peace, and the first sweet notes of a true concord. Soreness there will be, no doubt, for many a long day, and much need of patience and wisdom and maganimity to tide over the re-settling of a devastated country. But there can be no wish in any true, heroic heart but to build a golden bridge for a brave enemy, and to make the treaty of peace the beginning of a real pacification of feeling and interests.

Most of all are we thankful that a time of retrogression in the history of mankind and civilisation and Christianity has come to an end. Nothing is more distressing or more perplexing to the thoughtful man than the presence and continuance of war in the Christian era. Not that I am one of those who think that the Gospel of Christ actually forbids war under all circumstances. I am sure war may be entered upon in a great Christian spirit, and that there are occasions when it is justified from the Christian point of view. And yet the most righteous war is a sad commentary on the civilisation of Christendom. Even if it be just and necessary it is a retrogression—a putting back of the clock, and represents a breakdown of the rule of right reason. It is a shattering for the time being of all that binds and knits society together, and of all the efforts of men to build the City of God on earth in equity, brotherhood, and trust. Society falls to pieces before our eyes. It abandons its work; it gives up the game. War is the confession of the failure of equity and wisdom. All the root assumptions of social intercourse have collapsed. Industry comes to a standstill. Fruitful fields won from the prairie, are trampled down into bloody clay. The labours of generations in the founding of homesteads, in the building of churches and schools, in maintaining the fabric of social order, are brought to nought. Courts of justice are closed. We are reduced to the primitive brutalities of physical force.

It is an unspeakable blessing when that wild time comes to an end, and men take up once again, with chastened hearts, the tasks of peace. It is the glory of Christianity that in spite of a thousand wars, it has never ceased to believe in a time—a far-off time it may be—of universal peace. It is an ideal which specially belongs to the Christian religion. Men of the world call it Utopian, and assure us that wars will continue so long as human nature is what it is. Perhaps. But then it is our faith that human nature is travelling on to something better. Men smile when they hear a prophet foretelling a day when swords shall be beaten

into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks. They call him a dreamer. Let them. All men who have shewn our race how great things are possible, and have moved them to their achievement have been dreamers. All wisdom and progress begin in dreams. We must see our Utopias with the mind's eye before we can build them in stone and brick.

"It takes a soul
To move a body; it takes a high-souled man
To move the masses even to a cleaner stye;
It takes the ideal to blow an inch inside
The dust of the actual."

Moreover, it is our faith that the will of the All-wise and the All-good is that wars should come to a final end. "He maketh wars to cease in all the world. He breaketh the bows and cutteth the spears in sunder. He burneth the war chariots in the fire." That is the mind of God. That is the intention of Providence.

But how? It seems to me that our text is a parable of how. Long ago Channing shewed how many of the springs, forces and passions of war, together with the qualities we admire in the soldier—courage, daring, self-sacrifice, obedience, and discipline, might and should all be turned to nobler and more beneficent uses.

Among other causes of war, he pointed out how powerful is the admiration men feel at the brilliant qualities it sometimes calls forth. Men do not delight in war for its carnage and miseries and waste, but for its valour, its self-sacrifice, its heroic opportunities, its fortitude, its resolution, its superiority to the sensation of fear. Out of all the horrors of the battle field there sometimes rises before us a moral character which startles us by its beauty—the character of the "Happy Warrior" painted by Wordsworth—just, magnanimous, "which through the heat of conflict keeps the law in calmness made"—which with steadiness of will, and firmness of nerve, and strength of discipline, combines a certain nobility of reserve and delicacy of honour, and deference and gentleness most winning and attractive. Such a character did Thackeray draw for us in Colonel Newcome. Men like this are soldiers in the spirit of the inscription at Thermopylæ:—"These 300 died in obedience to the Laws." They were witnesses for Law and Obedience. All discipline is included in that, and all personal valour. Such a character did all men see and honour in a Havelock, in an Outram, in the two Lawrences, in Headley Vicars, in General Gordon —to speak only of the dead. With all its horrors and crimes, its depressing and intolerable carnage, there are qualities which come to the front in the good soldier which win universal admiration — self-sacrifice, duty, obedience, honour, magnanimity. These are spiritual qualities—they are the sword and the spear of the soldierly character. How shall they become the ploughshare and the pruning hook of a peaceful civilisation? Society cannot afford to dispense with these soldierly qualities, but what society wants is that these same metals should fashion weapons of another kind, and that these same qualities should be enlisted in a diviner warfare. Society surely needs the chivalry and valour and heroism and self-devotion and splendour of courage we find in the soldier. But is there no room for these qualities except at the point of the sword? To turn these qualities to social uplifting, to that true magnanimity which is prodigal of ease and comfort and life in the service of God and man, to the unshaken adherence, amidst scorn and neglect, to truth and humanity—this is how to transform swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks. General Gordon found in the courts and alleys of Woolwich work demanding the same high spirit of courage, enterprise, forgetfulness of self-interest, and devotion to lofty aims, as he found in the long agony of the fight round Khartoum. Christianity alone can conquer the fear of war, because it alone can venture to assimilate these forces, and turn them to its own purer service. The very qualities that make the warlike spirit on its better side are the qualities needed to resist the warlike spirit on its evil side. It is sometimes said that without war to excite and invigorate the human mind some of its noblest energies will never be developed, and some of its highest qualities—courage, fortitude, the willingness to expose our life for a great cause —will never be called forth. I answer that Christianity calls forth all these qualities in social service, in moral uplifting, in the great cause of truth, progress, and the Kingdom of God. Do you want a field for daring and self-devotion? Hear it is in the slums of your great cities. Do you desire a sphere for high-spirited nerve, for fiery courage, for Christian zeal, for radiant readiness to suffer and die? Follow me, says Christ, and you shall find them all. Here in the advance of truth, here in the bettering of human conditions, here in the

healing of social wounds, here in contention for justice and humanity, here in blotting out social plague spots, here in the war with vice, intemperance, ignorance, apathy, greed, indulgence, laziness, prejudice, bigotry, and selfishness, is a victory to be won calling for all soldierly qualities. Here is a banner flying to the winds, around which brave hearts may rally for the rescue of the oppressed, for the defence of the weak, for the hope of brotherhood. To follow Christ in a world like this needs great nerve, high valour, a spirit which will fight on his side to the end against all that is cruel and unclean. Not that the steel of the human spirit is to be buried, but instead of shaping a weapon for destruction, it is to shape a weapon of salvation.

God grant that the fine soldierly qualities so lately displayed in war may be brought to bear on the re-construction of the social edifice in South Africa now that the war has come to an end. Already we are told the green grass waves again over some of the places where the earlier battles were fought. Let us hope that as Nature thus draws her mantle over those gaping wounds and ghastly sights, so the fine instincts of civilisation, the quickening forces of Christianity, and the high ambition which seeks to exalt justice, mercy, and truth in the earth, will smooth over the festering enmities and the bitter jealousies of the past, and bind together these two races in that noble fellowship of good works and wise projects which shall leave no trace or thought for vengeance or schemes of revenge. May Boer and Briton, side by side, sow and reap in peace; may a new spirit o'erbear the old; may a new conquest be celebrated, even the conquest of mutual forgiveness, leading on to true liberty, civic justice, and a better civilisation.

Stray Thoughts.

The difficulty when one draws near middle-age is that one sees one's limitations so clearly in all directions. It is hard to walk with enthusiasm and hope when one has lost the good dream of youth—that *somehow* all these "lets and hindrances," mental and physical, will one day suddenly drop away and leave one free to live the larger life. These strong innate faults of character—one must expect to relapse into them again and again, struggle as one may. These physical "thorns in the flesh"—small perhaps when looked at singly, yet collectively utterly wearing and irritating, especially at times when additional causes have conspired to depress one's mind—here they are, and one must make one's reckoning with them, as they are like to remain until this mortal coil is shuffled off. Turn where one will, if one faces the truth, one is bound to recognise that outward troubles are not in the least likely to diminish with years, but rather to increase. It is well to realise this, because then one is thrown back on inner sources of strength as being the one and only good in this world. And the great thing is, that in a moment of inward strength one feels how absolutely beside the mark all manner of ills are when one has reached that stronghold—a free mind, fearing nothing. It may take one all one's life to overcome the fear of pain, and much besides, but if one goes on always steadfastly doing "what one is afraid to do," will it not be a glorious thing if in the end one is no longer afraid, and so can liberate others from bondage? If one could once fully realise that *the Best* is in one's own power, and that no ill chances can deprive one of it (of course, *mental* illness might, but then one would not remember what one had lost) would one not walk more freely and nobly, and be less at the mercy of chance? This is what M. Arnold means when he says—

"And they, believe me, who await
No gift from Chance, have mastered Fate."

It is, of course, difficult to strike a happy medium and be grateful for pleasant things without depending on them, the more so as one is so constantly exhorted to gratitude for them by others, or envied by those who have them not; yet surely the real thing to remember is that all these "mercies" are only secondary; the chief good lies in the mind, and there alone. That is why such books as Lubbock's "Pleasures of Life" are so fundamentally astray and irritating. Let us get at the meaning of life, and leave the "pleasures" to take their chance! Without *that* "pleasures" are a very poor sort of concern.

* * * * *

Christ is the supreme Deliverer because He faced and conquered the worst things that can befall humanity—pain, loneliness, anguish of spirit, death. Is not this a secret which will

help with any personal pain, physical or mental? If we can look on ourselves as "holding a brief" for other poor human creatures afflicted in a like way—whether it be mental depression or physical pain—and feel such overmastering pity and love for them that we *cannot* give in to the enemy and so make it less possible for *them* to conquer him—will not this help us to meet it bravely, by taking away that sense of isolation and purposeless suffering which is so dispiriting in illness and bodily or mental pain?

Some sorts of pain, which are *evidently* borne for others or for some great cause, such as the pains of martyrs or those of motherhood, have an inspiring element about them which must take away half their agony. It is because ill-health and mental suffering seem to end with ourselves that they are so hard to bear. Yet if, by some such thought as the preceding, we can link them with a mighty and inspiring aim, they will lose half their bitterness.

* * * * *

Is it not something to be grateful for, if, as a result of one's life hitherto, this has been borne in upon one—that nothing but Love and the brave spirit it rouses is worth anything in life, that no prosperity is worth a straw in comparison with it, and no misfortunes matter if we can keep it alive within us? To have looked on life and to have seen the worst of it—pain, partings, disappointments, failures, weariness, change, and death—is to see that there is no rest or help anywhere but in the inner sanctuary of a brave spirit, and to know that if we have *that*, nothing else matters. If we put our trust in Circumstance we are indeed miserable. Nothing avails but to strive year by year to gain a settled trust in God, revealed in our souls as Love.

* * * * *

If religion be true, then no sort of adverse circumstances—trouble, pain—in life, matter one straw; nay, they are rather to be "gloried in" as means whereby we may rise to the highest good—the only real good in life. If, on the other hand, it be *not* true—if our highest hopes are a chimera—why care about earthly comfort—pleasure—"happiness" in life? These things pass and turn to dust and ashes, simply because we have something in us which cannot be satisfied with less than the Infinite. If we are finite—if what we call the spiritual in us be a delusion—then we are of all creatures most miserable, and no "happiness" can avail to comfort us. But if, on the contrary, our supreme good and hope lies in religion—in striking roots into the Eternal and Infinite—then "pleasure" and "pain" are neither here nor there; they are negative conditions, and only become positive according as we use them as means to strengthen our relation to the Infinite.

So we see that whichever way we look at it, "happiness" or "prosperity" is a matter of no importance, since *without it* we can attain to the supreme good, and *with it* we are no better off if that supreme good be a delusion.

But is not the "objective testimony" (as Romanes points out) of those who have *experienced* this supreme good, enough in itself to prove that it is *not* a delusion?

If the feelings of peace and ecstasy experienced by saints and the religious-minded people who have met and overcome much trouble in life be (as we cannot doubt) so much the most precious experience possible to the soul of man, as far transcending what the earthly-minded call "pleasure" as the sun transcends a tallow candle; does not this point to some objective reality in the spiritual sphere, just as "pleasure" to the worldly-minded is caused by some sensible object or possession in the physical sphere? And if there is a chance of our in the end experiencing this supreme good, and leading others to love it and seek it, can we not bravely face all earthly "trouble?" What else is there worth living for? and why do we hanker after "happiness" which would lead us no nearer to our true goal? But our weakness is that we wish to compromise; we hope for the supreme good in the end, and yet we want the "happiness" *en route*. We should be stronger and better if we could once for all put happiness out of our account, and simply bend all our energies to meeting the circumstances which cross our path in such a way as to lead us always nearer to the Supreme good.

* * * * *

If we could keep this faith in religion as being the supreme good always alive and burning in us, we should never be really unhappy; we should meet all things with courage. It is when we lose hold of it that we are really miserable, for then our weakness and uncertainty seem intolerable. And, on the supposition that it *is* the supreme good, is not this

exactly the trial—the most searching and terrible trial—by means of which we may be meant to attain it? If we can only battle through these times of despair and weakness for the *sake of others*—for the sake of proving to others equally wretched that by this very means Faith may grow stronger and fairer than before—we may come at last to know the "peace which passeth all understanding," and *then* what in all the universe is there to fear? Our souls are freed; we are "children of God" at last. The more I live, and the more I think, the more I am convinced of this—that the faith that we are anchored in the Infinite (and how striking it is that *scientifically* the Infinite is the only anchorage we have) is the only faith by which to face life—the only faith to save us from despair. Looked at from any other standpoint, life is a hideous nightmare. Surely it is more *reasonable* to believe that Life and the Universe are at least *as* spiritual in tendency, as our own highest consciousness, than that our consciousness is an anomaly in a world-system of purposeless brutality—vacuity. DOROTHEA HOLLINS.

Curiosities of Stained Glass.

PART II.

Anachronisms in church windows are somewhat numerous, especially in the matter of costume and surroundings. As the great masters among oil-painters depicted their saints in the costume of their own country at the epoch in which they themselves lived, so glass-painters may be credited with the same palpable blunders. A Madonna of the fifteenth century is, in Germany, dressed in German costume, and her features are German; an Italian window will have an Italian Madonna from head to foot; and the Flemish painters depict her of buxom proportions and dressed in Flemish bodice and head-dress.

A curious instance of this eccentric use of mediæval costume upon saintly persons who lived fifteen centuries previously may be seen at Gouda, in Holland, where some of the apostles are wearing slouch-hats *à la* Boer of South Africa. One of the windows in Gouda church represents "The Last Supper," and the thirteen persons usually shown (hence the absurd superstition of ill-luck attending one of thirteen who dine together) are augmented to fifteen by the entrance of the King of Spain, who gave the window, and his Queen. St. Peter, with his chamberlain's staff of office, is introducing this sixteenth-century couple to our Lord! Could bad taste and intrusiveness be carried further?

A still more curious anachronism as to alteration of time was in the case of a window painted some thirty years since for a convent in Ireland, by which the first and nineteenth century were made to join hands. It came about thus: A certain matronly superioress of a newly-formed convent, being anxious to make her order appear as old as possible, gave instructions for a "Via Dolorosa" window to be painted; and among the crowd was to be shown a nun in the costume of her *new* order with a *crucifix* suspended from her neck. This work was actually carried out, and the window was duly fixed, showing the Saviour *carrying* the cross, while the nun was showing by her crucifix an event which had *not yet taken place!* Pressure was brought to bear, and the crucifix was removed; but the nineteenth-century nun, I believe, still remains a spectator of the event which took place about A.D. 34.

Clever ideas are sometimes embodied in windows, of which two instances must suffice. The commonly accepted idea of our Lord receiving the vinegar whilst upon the cross is by means of a sponge, dipped in the liquid, held aloft upon a reed or staff; but in an old window our Lord holds the reed in His mouth and sucks the vinegar (or sour wine) from a saturated sponge held up by a compassionate attendant.

Another capital idea of a mechanical kind is shown in a West of England window. The subject is Noah taking provisions into the ark. He is a gigantic person, standing at a port-hole, from which to the shore is an inclined plane made from a board of wood. Noah is shown hauling a tremendous barrel (probably a tierce of beef) up this plank by means of two ropes, which, being fixed to the side of the vessel, are carried under the barrel, then over it, and the free ends rest in Noah's hands. Never mind thinking, as you look at the scene, that the barrel is four times as large as the port-hole Noah is about to try and pull it through—that is his affair; but not the capital use of two powers, the inclined plane and the leverage of a circular mass by two ropes.

Many years ago (less than forty) a charitable lady was importuned by the head of an English

college to place a painted window in the college chapel, and at length, wearied with being so repeatedly asked, she yielded, stipulating only that she should choose her own subject, and that the window should not be viewed until the proper day arrived for its unveiling. In due time the window was painted and fixed; and when the veiling cloth was removed, behold she had chosen as her Biblical subject Job plagued with boils, and Job's face was a very fair representation of the master who had plagued the lady. Needless to say, the window was removed, and another subject inserted at someone else's expense, probably that of the master.

Many curious blunders have been perpetrated by stained-glass draughtsmen, and either inadvertently or knowingly carried out by the actual painter of the glass itself (for the two artists are of distinct branches of glass-painting); the following having come under the writer's personal observation. In a window sent for exhibition from Canada—subject, "The Last Supper"—our Lord, in the act of blessing the bread, exhibited on His raised hand *five* fingers and a thumb!

On one or two occasions six toes have been noticed on one foot, and four joints have been painted on one finger. Then there are cases where persons have received the distinction of having two left or two right feet; and in one window in a London church a "foolish virgin" has two hands, but only one visible arm!

Such instances might be greatly multiplied—for they are numerous—when patrons insist on having a window fixed at such an early date as to preclude proper attention being bestowed upon minor details of anatomy!

Besides saints and other holy and secular persons being rendered in glass, animals are frequently introduced. It is usual to show the head of a cow in the "Nativity," and the ass is usually associated with the "Good Samaritan" or "The Flight into Egypt;" but even the pig, that unclean animal of the Bible, has also come down to us through several centuries in all the glory of stained glass, and may be seen in the east window of Cartmel Fell Church, Westmoreland, as an attendant upon Good St. Anthony, whose battered figure has survived the blasts and frosts of five hundred years.

Centuries of immobility cause many curious growths upon the back of glass, which in time becomes deeply pitted and half-eaten through by the chemical action of acid in the atmosphere, and which no clever forger of glass has yet been able to imitate so as to deceive the eye of the connoisseur. Moss, lichen, and small plants are frequently found flourishing in the decayed portions of antique glass; and the writer, in restoring the fifteenth-century glass of a church in Kent, actually removed several tufts of grass nearly three inches long.

Whilst restoring a window from the Midland counties, a large lump of solder attracted his attention; and, being flat and circular, he had the curiosity to cut it open, when he discovered a silver coin as large as a two-shilling piece, and of the reign of Charles II., embedded in the hard mass. Probably the window had been re-leaded during the reign of the Merry Monarch, and the glazier, in the fulness of his heart at receiving a good order, placed the coin in its curious hiding-place, so that the lucky finder (myself) might drink "a health unto His Majesty."

Sometimes difficulties occur in carrying out certain incidents in a Biblical subject, and such a dilemma occurred when the writer painted the very large east window for St. George's Cathedral, Sierra Leone. The Bishop had stipulated for as many black men to be introduced into the various subjects as possible; and among the scenes was "The Resurrection," which, of course, brought in a number of Roman soldiers. Now came the artist's dilemma. Could he draw a Roman soldier with a black face with any warranty of correctness? He argued to himself: "The Romans conquered nearly all the known world, and probably pressed Ethiopians into their service." Not to be without extraneous help, he sat down and wrote to several clerical friends, but unfortunately applied to an even number, and received four replies "yea" and four "nay," so that he was as far from a true solution of his difficulty as before. Acting, therefore, as his own chairman, he gave his casting vote "yea," and the negro in Roman armour duly appeared in the window, much to the joy of the Sierra Leonians at seeing a brother in such martial array.

It must not be forgotten that along the north coast of Africa the Virgin Mary is frequently depicted as a *black* woman.

E. R. Suffling.

Louisa May Alcott.

"A SPARTAN SPIRIT."

[Born Sermantown, Penn., Nov. 29, 1832. Moved to Boston, 1834. Educated by her father, Amos Bronson Alcott. Lived at "Fruitlands," near Concord, 1843-45. Concord, 1845-48. Back to Boston, 1848. First Book, 1854. Hospital Nurse, 1862. Visit to Europe, 1865. Wrote "*Little Women*," 1868. Second visit to Europe, 1870. "*Little Men*," 1871. *Work*, 1873. Author of *Novels* (4 vols.); *Little Women Series* (8 vols.); *Spinning Wheel Stories* (4 vols.); *Aunt Jo's Scrap Bag* (6 vols.); *Lulu's Library* (3 vols.). Died, Boston, March 6, 1888].

"The Spartan spirit that made life so grand
Mating poor daily needs
With high, heroic deeds,
That wrested happiness from Fate's hard hand."

The above lines sound out the brave life-note of Louisa May Alcott. Written by her as a tribute to her mother, they are yet more true of the daughter. "Resolved to take Fate by the throat, and shake a living out of her;" thus she writes in her Journal when but "a large, bashful girl," and only a Spartan spirit, high and heroic, could have carried that resolution out. But in face of heavy family debt, which she early set herself to meet, and as the result of exhausting and unceasing work, *she did it*. How we share her pride in the crowning record! "Twenty years ago I resolved to make the family independent if I could. At forty that is done. Debts all paid, even the outlawed ones, and we have enough to be comfortable. It has cost me my health, perhaps; but, as I still live, there is more for me to do, I suppose." Thus did she wrest happiness and independence for herself and others.

It does one good in many ways, it braces up our nerves, to come into touch, through her Letters and Journals, with this devoted woman, this unconquered home-heroine. The *Encyclo-*

pedia Britannica, in its new volume, assigns less than a column to her name, but she was worthy of more extended mention. Her life is a stimulating tonic for the depressed, the overworked, the pessimistic.

Her outward story admits of simple summary. Her father, the friend of Emerson and W. H. Channing, was the least practical apostle of the Concord Transcendental School, a lovable idealist whose best-laid schemes always came to naught, and whose chronic state was that of an empty pocket; "so poor, so hopeful, so serene." Her mother was a sister of Samuel J. May, and shared her brother's courage in the anti-slavery cause. Fine New England traditions thus ran through her veins, and she herself became an abolitionist at a very early age. Her earliest recollections were of building bridges, houses, and towers in her father's study; her earliest readings were from the *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Krummacher's Parables*, Miss Edgeworth, fairy tales, and, on Sunday, Bible stories; her earliest religious impressions were so rich and precious, so sustained in after years, that she must recount them in her own words. "I remember running over the hills just at dawn one summer morning, and, pausing to rest in the silent woods, saw, through an arch of trees, the sun rise over river, hill, and wide green meadows as I never saw it before. Something born of the lovely hour, a happy mood, and the unfolding aspirations of a child's soul, seemed to bring me very near to God; and in the hush of that morning hour I always felt that I 'got religion,' as the phrase goes. A new and vital sense of His presence, tender and sustaining as a father's arms, came to me then, never to change through forty years of life's vicissitudes, but to grow stronger for the sharp discipline of poverty and pain, sorrow and success."

A happy childhood passed away too quickly into this discipline of poverty, drudgery, and constant anxiety. The father, like Micawber, was always waiting for something to turn up, or else vainly "trying his luck;" the mother maintained the spirits of the family on the motto "hope and keep busy;" but on the daughter was laid the real grinding task to work and pay off the debt. Nobly and bravely she rose to the duty. After trying in turn teaching and sewing, she struck out a new line and took to writing, and with just sufficient appreciation to encourage her to go on. She must leave the country home and go into Boston if she would make herself known. The Journal reveals the spirit of her going. "Decided to seek my fortune, so with my little trunk of home-made clothes, 20 dollars earned by stories, and my MSS. I set forth with mother's blessing. . . . I don't often pray in words, but when I set out that day with all my worldly goods in the little old trunk, my own earnings in my pocket, and much hope and resolution in my soul, my heart was very full, and I said to the Lord, "Help us all, and keep us for one another," as I never said it before.

Her Sunday delight there was to hear Theodore Parker, who would come up to her and say cordially, "Well, child, how goes it?" "Pretty well, sir." "That's brave," and send her away proud and happy, with a warm shake of the hand. She called this "A Year of Good Luck," for she received better pay for her literary work.

Then the war broke out, and she, a devoted abolitionist, must serve the anti-slavery cause and volunteer as a nurse. She was sent to the front, and took up hospital work, but she was not sufficiently robust for the task. Fever shattered her nerves within six weeks, and she never regained the lost ground. "I was never ill before this time, and never well afterwards." But her nursing experience, brief though it was, deepened her knowledge of life's tragedies, and her published "Hospital Sketches" mark a very great advance. They were veritable human documents, dramatic scenes, pictures fresh from life—or death.

The next few years, during which she visited Europe, were a disappointing blank in her literary ventures. But a sudden change came over the scene by the publication, in 1869, of *Little Women*. This was her first great success, her masterpiece, the turning point in her fortunes. One would rather have the children's opinion than our own about this volume, but it is one that even the elders do not scorn. Children's books have much increased since Miss Alcott's days, but *Little Women* still holds its place. It is so simple, but not silly, so tender in feeling, but not sentimental, so full of humour, but not caricature, so true to life and character. "We really lived most of it"—there is the secret. "I was born with a boy's spirit under my bib and tucker"—there is the source of all the fun and adventure. Long life to *Little Women!*

It was quickly followed by *The Old-Fashioned Girl*, bright, fresh, and sparkling, yet written with her left hand in a sling, one foot up, and her head aching. Like Lamb and Hood, and how many others, she turned writer's woes into readers' joys!

And this is the heroic side of her life, unknown to readers of her stories only; this is her own story, one of such ceaseless and arduous struggle that she writes, "Every day is a battle, and I'm so tired I don't want to live; only it's cowardly to die until you have done something."

And she *did* the something to which she had set her resolution. We cannot follow all her further stories, which ran to no less than 25 volumes, but with the proceeds she paid off all the family debts and took two more visits to Europe, becoming the most popular story writer for children in her time.

Learn her life lesson—to work and to wait. Do not covet the too easy lot. "I can imagine an easier life, but with love, health, and work I can be happy." Catch the cheerful, humorous spirit which takes the sting out of drudgery. "Scrub away with a good heart." "Praise the Lord and keep busy." Do not shirk work. "I shall turn in for my last long sleep with more content, in spite of mortal weariness, than if I had folded my hands and been supported in elegant idleness." Remember the last words she ever wrote—"Slow climbing, but I don't slip back; so think up my mercies and sing cheerfully. Thus far the Lord hath led me on!"

FRANK K. FREESTON.

Art and Life.

GIOTTO.

In the last issue of *The Seed Sower* I spoke of the pictures by Giotto in the Arena Chapel at Padua. I remember well the flying visit I paid to this place, and with what extreme reluctance I tore myself away to catch a train. I do not, as a rule, waste much time catching trains, but I have rarely wasted less than on this occasion. To the very last moment I stayed looking at the frescoes in this ancient chapel, with floods of thoughts rushing through my head, and with the feeling that probably I should never see them again. I had time to notice what I love to see in Giotto's work—his delight in the simple

humanities from which he sprang. I am sure he was never ashamed of having been a shepherd boy. I saw two figures of shepherds, which were very beautiful—faces of serving men in the rustic dress of Medieval Italy, solemn with that expression of wonder and worship, which always makes the human countenance beautiful. There were other shepherds, not so well painted, in the pictures, quite a large number of sheep, and some dogs. I also saw a donkey, carrying Jesus into Jerusalem. The great Christian artist, who gave his highest powers to representations of Jesus and the Madonna and the saints, did not neglect the ass on which the Saviour rode to the Temple. It is most tenderly done, the work of a man who obviously loved animals. I observed, too, another sign of greatness in the painter—his humour. In the scene of the Marriage Feast at Cana is a big, fat man tasting the new wine. He drinks from a large glass, and does not look like stopping soon. His scepticism, that of a son of the world, coarse and

earthly, changes to admiration—*for the liquor!* Masterly as a piece of grotesque is a figure of Satan, Giotto's own, I should think—a black shadow at Judas' elbow, with long claw-like fingers, a hooked Jewish nose, white cruel teeth, and an eye that pierces like a live coal. It is terribly weird—just the sort of creature I like to think haunts those who put the name Unitarian on Free Churches.

There is another Satan in this medieval gallery—more conventional, but with not less interest. It is in a representation, covering the west wall, of the Last Judgment. Heaven is on the left, Hell on the right. In the bottom of the latter squats a hairy monster, with horns and a serpent-tail, holding a victim in each hand and crunching a third in his horrible jaws. It at once recalls Dante's conception; and I remembered how Dante and Giotto must have stood side by side in this building, one at work with his brush, the other standing by and making suggestions! In the Heaven is a portrait, not of Dante, as in the Heaven in the Bargello at Florence, but, according to tradition, of Giotto himself. If this be correct, it confirms the stories of his plainness. He was the butt of some of his comrades, as Boccaccio tells us. One day in front of his house in Florence—the house apparently that his master, Cimabue, left him—in the Via del Cocomero, he was thrown down by a runaway pig. "The brute is right," he cried; "many a hundred florins have I earned by his bristles, but I never gave him a bowl of broth." He was a little man, with a plain face and a merry heart, and a way of seeming less earnest than he was. I often associate him with Chaucer, who had the same kindly humour and simplicity, and almost hidden seriousness. It is pleasant to think that Chaucer, when at Padua in 1373, saw Giotto's work in this chapel, fresh and beautiful. It was a boast of Petrarch, whom Chaucer met at Padua, that he had known Giotto and possessed one of his pictures. It is a place to linger in, where Giotto, Dante, Petrarch, and our own Chaucer have been, looking at what we may see to-day, pondering on the great truths of life and eternity.

E. I. F.

Only the good discerns the good.

Our Symposium.

Scene.—Lee's Study, a bare, uncarpeted room, overlooking a small, dingy town garden; beyond a railway siding, timber yard and gas works.

Mapps: Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors, I hear that you have been up to the Whitsun meetings, and have come back blown out with the satisfaction that of all men on God's earth you exemplify Freedom, Veracity, Open Fellowship, Character and Civic Duty. I see Baxter with a quickened sense of his own virtue, and as for Lee—"pride in his port"—I forget how the quotation goes on, but the next part of it will, I am sure, do for Harcourt.

Harcourt: No, sir, you don't see anything of the sort in me, for I came away feeling that of some of these things, Freedom for instance, we have made a great deal too much, that it has in fact become a shibboleth with us quite as much as Authority with a Romanist. And as for Character, I think it is monstrous we should be setting ourselves up as so much superior to other Christians. Indeed, when it comes to right down saintliness Unitarians are not in it with many a humble priest and devoted nun of the Roman Church.

Baldwin: Restrain thine ardour, good youth. I do not understand that our friend Armstrong claimed for us that we are actually better men than others, but that as a body we set Character before Creed, and care a great deal more whether a man is a good man than whether he holds this belief or that. A man may say that without meaning thereby, "I am holier than thou," the very last thing one can imagine Armstrong saying. His other principle, Open Fellowship, implies a frank recognition of the fact that like spiritual grace may be found in all the churches, his contention being that ours is the one church, as a church, fully recognising that fact.

Baxter: With all respect to Armstrong, and there is no man among us I more admire and honour, or who is more worthy of admiration and honour, I wish he did not so often convey the impression to outsiders, that in our own estimation we are the people, and wisdom will die with us. It may be true that his five principles receive a greater emphasis from us, *as a body*, than from others, a more frequent expression, and possibly a more intelligent appreciation of their scope and what they lead to, but it does not at all follow that we are more faithful to them either in our churches or our personal lives.

Lee: My dear boy, I don't want to spear you with your own argument, but intelligent appreciation of the scope of Veracity, for instance, is much more likely to lead to exemplification of it than a dim, misty appreciation of its scope.

Baldwin: I am not so sure of that. "Thou believest in God, thou doest well; the devils also believe"—

Mapps: Methinks the lady doth protest too much. Doubtless the devils believe, and much good their belief does them, but I question if they are always saying "I believe," and that is the point; not whether we are more or less veracious than others, but whether we don't protest our veracity a little too much.

Baldwin: When Mapps interrupted me I was going on to say that intelligent appreciation often goes along with very faulty realisation—

Mapps: We have heard that before; Aristotle, Bacon, and Revival Dick, and Mr. Podsnap have remarked the same.

Baldwin: I apologise for repeating the obvious, but if Mapps will allow me to go on—

Baxter: Before you go on let me throw a sidelight on the point I know Baldwin is driving at, from an incident in our college history. When Manchester College built itself a home at Oxford, nothing gave greater offence to a university disposed on the whole to look with benevolent neutrality on the newcomers, than the inscription over the portal: "To Truth, to Liberty, to Religion." Oxford resented what it took to be a quite unwarrantable claim to a monopoly, or if not that, a pretension on the part of this institution to a special and exceptional devotion to these great ideals. People neither bigoted nor captious felt that a better taste would have suggested the omission of the inscription, and behind the grave sarcasm of the don who is reported to have asked "And will you also engrave those words on your plate, and embroider them on your college linen?" there lurked a feeling of very real and widespread displeasure.

Baldwin: I am obliged to Baxter for his illustration. I think it may be admitted that on the whole our people do put a good deal of emphasis on veracity, and that they do make much of seeing the thing as it is and speaking of it as they see it. Let it be true that there are fewer mental reservations with us in proportion to our numbers than others.

Lee: That in fact we do not change the question What is truth? into the question What is Trumps? What will please and pay and win the day?—but go on, Baldwin.

Baldwin: Yet it may not be quite becoming on our part to be always drawing attention to the fact. If a man is six feet six inches he cannot but know that he stands head and shoulders above the crowd, and to pretend not to know it is mock modesty. But he need not be shouting as he goes along "Behold how tall I am?"

Harcourt: But what do you think of the relation of Principles to Doctrines?

Mapps: What an awful question to plump down upon us. Harcourt's enquiries are too big. Why not ask us, what do you think of the relations of the universe to man?

Lee: Nevertheless, you cannot dissociate principles from doctrines, and I for one entirely agree with Armstrong, that when the principles are intelligently held, the only logical conclusion is Unitarian doctrine!

Baxter: I am not sure that Armstrong said any such thing. If he did, much as I look up to Armstrong, I should certainly disagree. I am quite sure it is possible for a man to hold Armstrong's five principles and be perfectly loyal to them in his own consciousness, and yet remain both a Trinitarian and a member of the Church of England. A good deal of mischief has been done by the frequent assertion that certain principles must necessarily involve Unitarianism, and that if we hold them and do not confess ourselves Unitarians we are scarcely honest. The truth is, these principles are not specially the notes of Unitarianism—they are rather the notes of Liberal Religion wherever found—not that other men are not veracious and lovers of freedom and character, and generous in their fellowship, and full of a sense of civic duty. T. T. Lynch held these principles as firmly as any of us and never became a Unitarian. The Church of England has, I suppose, more disciples of Robertson of Brighton within its borders than the whole Unitarian body numbers. They claim a full share in these principles, but they are not Unitarians. Baldwin Brown had as ardent a passion for freedom and veracity as any of us, but he was not led into our doctrine. To think that Veracity must needs come to our conclusion on the great things of the soul and its culture and its destiny is to convict ourselves of a kind of priggishness!

Lee: Baxter, don't get into a rage and stamp the floor so horribly. If a man in his veracity putteth not a carpet on his study floor, being too poor to afford it, you need not call attention to his virtue in that way!

Mapps: I did not hear Armstrong, so I do not know exactly where he put the emphasis, but to my mind there is no more necessary connection between these universal principles and Unitarian doctrines than there is between Lee's study and yonder gas-works. It is true both are grubby—(*omnes*, "oh! oh!")—and yet both are supposed to generate light—of a sort! But,—

Baldwin: Armstrong's confession that he did not know whether the principles brought forth the doctrine or the doctrine the principles,—

Mapps: Is to say that it is a matter of doubt whether the mountain brought forth the mouse or the mouse the mountain!

Lee: Wretch! Do you mean to say that these doctrines of ours born of these principles are only a mouse of which the mountain has been delivered?

Mapps; I say nothing of the kind. But it does seem to me that to hint at the possibility of Unitarian doctrines giving birth to universal principles is very much as if we supposed the mouse brought forth the mountain.

Lee: But I contend that Unitarian doctrines are themselves universal!

Baldwin: Yes; that is what every little sect under the sun has claimed for its doctrine.

Mapps: And every denominational gaslight declares itself to be as world-wide as the sun. O happy delusion!

[*Here the reporter, having to catch a train, hurriedly left the room.*]

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The Road-Makers.

October, with the yellowing of leaves,
And morning-mists that melt to the bright day,
Dull clouds with fitful breaks of tender blue,
Pale sunshine and the chilling breath of change.

Over the road the tramp of many feet,
The clattering of many iron hoofs,
The busy hum of traffic—where, of late,
The grass-leaves nodded twinkling in the breeze,
And dandelions starr'd with gold the green;
Over the road cycles and motor-cars,
Electric-trams and ceaseless whir of wheels,
Smart carriages and cabs and carts and drays,
And all the tumult of the noisy world.

Where starts the road, and whither does it lead?
Whence come the feet, and whither do they go?

This is the public road where all may tread,
This is the common ground of rich and poor;
Here all are equal underneath the sun.

Picks, forks, and shovels glitter merrily;
The clink and scrape of labour sound along
The toiling gang in brown-ribb'd corduroys,
Knee-strapp'd and belted, coats off, sleeves roll'd up,
Sweating in chill October; gay withal,
Or, if not gay, stolid, unmurmuring:
Some press the fork into the stony earth
With foot-irons, bearing with full weight and strength;
Some wield the pick, or shovel up the loam
And pitch into the waiting trucks to fill
Some hollow down the line; some deeper dig
To lay the wide-girth'd water-pipes, and some
Make measurements for curbs and depth of bed.

This road shall be well built, and grounded firm
With ashes, slag, and tar and granite-stones,
Roll'd, wedg'd, and solid as a bed of rock,
Sure for the foot of ages yet to come;
This road shall drain itself like watersheds,
And be well kept in flood and summer heat.

Over the road perambulators pass,
Over the road passes the bridal coach,
Over the road passes the hearse of death.

Over the road passes the merchandise,
Over the road the children pass to school,
Over the road pass thieves and murderers.

The road goes North and South and East and West;
The road goes where you will, and you must choose;
The road goes straight, the road goes round about;
The road goes over mountains and through dales;
The road goes inland and toward the sea.

Blue sky and solemn clouds are over all;
Thou may'st not fathom to the depths of blue,
Thou know'st not where the fleet cloud chariots go;
The eye of day, the eye of night, the stars
Are ever link'd with shadows; thou are girt
Around, above, below with mysteries,

And seëst dimly, darkly, through the veil,
Perchance some steps before thee; it were well
To bow thy head upon this public road,
And wait the inward vision and the light
Vouchsaf'd to thee; then shall thy goings be
A beacon unto men, though thy own way
Be darkness yet unsatisfied of light.

Yet glad is day, and glad the buoyant air,
And glad the sun, and glad the coursing clouds,
And gladsome is it on the public road
To waft good cheer and swing erect and strong,
With—"Brother, here's a hand and here's a heart,"
And—"Brother, here's a thought may stead you well;
Know that in thine own self is victory
And rift of blackest gloom; necessity
And destiny are over-match'd in thee."

Some walk where never human foot has trod,
Alone, companionless, no chart, no guide,
And where their bones bleach, rot, and fall to dust,
The heedless generations jostle on.

Road-makers, toiling through the burden'd years
(Weather'd, rain-proof, sun-tann'd, tough-grain'd, deep-breath'd),
Make passage for thy feet; where wert thou then?
Were these not found obedient to thy will?
—What doest *thou* to smooth the way of feet?

HARROLD JOHNSON.

Notes and Jottings.

The chief point of interest at the recent meeting of the General Assembly of the United Free Church of Scotland was the discussion upon the suggested heresy of Professor George Adam Smith. The charge was based upon the critical positions advocated with great force and clearness in his recent book on "The Preaching of the Old Testament." Professor Smith is one of the ablest and most stimulating exponents of the Old Testament literature and its meaning for modern life, and there was a widespread feeling that any Church, which tried to place him under the ban of silence, would only bring its own spiritual and intellectual life into contempt. At the same time a comparison of the doctrine of Scripture in the Westminster Confession and the Shorter Catechism with the views of the modern historical critic suggests some very uncomfortable questions, especially in the case of a teacher who is pledged to agree with the Confession and the Catechism.

As was to be expected, the Assembly decided by a large majority to do nothing. The speech

in which Principal Rainy urged that it was not the duty of the Church to proceed against Professor Smith was cautious and marked by a great deal of practical statesmanship. But at the same time it was profoundly inconsistent. It asked for an expression of unabated reverence for "the written Word," and exhorted people in the approved style of the new apologetics to be calm; and for the rest its policy amounted to this, that students for the ministry may be taught to accept certain beliefs about the Bible in the class-room, and must then deny their belief or explain it away as a condition of ordination.

This implied insult to the conscience and intellectual integrity of the candidate for ordination is one of the most serious issues involved in a controversy of this kind. It is not intended. There are many men who are able to persuade themselves of their essential orthodoxy by talking vaguely of Inspiration and Revelation. We do not wish to judge or condemn them. But we believe that they are the victims of an intellectual confusion, which is bound to re-act upon their own religious life, and to increase the alienation of the thinking part of the population from the churches.

Meanwhile, the Presbyterian Church in the United States seems to be more alive to its changed environment than our neighbours across the Border. A long controversy about the revision of its doctrinal standards has been closed recently by the adoption of several modifications, which, as Dr. Whitor points out, will have the effect of relegating to the class of negligible matters a vast amount of theological and speculative detail. Time will shortly reveal how far the new patches agree with the old garment.

A correspondent has sent an interesting account to the *Christian World* of the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Faculty of Protestant Theology at Paris. It was with the assistance of Gambetta that the Faculty was transferred from the University of Strasburg when Alsace became German territory. At the present time it has a growing importance, both in its influence upon religious thought in France and in the world beyond. In spite of its strong tinge of liberalism it is coming to be recognised as the central institution of French Protestantism, and even such an evangelical centre as Montauban pays it all due deference. A great deal was said at the commemoration of the influence of Auguste Sabatier, so well known to many English readers by his books on St. Paul and Christian Dogmas. He has been called, perhaps with a a touch of pardonable exaggeration, "the Schleiermacher of France." The whole of the proceedings appear to have been marked by great heartiness and a genuine love of liberty. What, for instance, could be better in its way than these words of Professor Bruston: "The business of a theological school is to elevate Christian piety by freeing the Churches from the usurped authority of obsolete prejudices, and by preventing them from separating the practice of goodness from the love of truth?"

The death of Father Dolling must have sent many readers back to "Ten Years in a Portsmouth Slum." It is a book full of the man himself, his energy and enthusiasm and self-forgetfulness, and his wonderful affection for the poor. He was a curious mixture of the Catholic and the Evangelical, holding prayer-meetings and celebrating masses for the dead, because he thought them true to human feeling. Of course neither of these practices find any place in Prayer-Book religion. The Church of England did not know how to treat such eccentricities, and so he was silenced. That was the tragedy of his life. His death has left many people asking whether the Anglican Church has no room for the exercise of original gifts. Certainly the Church of Rome would have known how to make a better use of his extraordinary powers.

We can only now make the barest mention of a book we hope to consider more fully on a future occasion, *Constructive Congregational Ideals, edited by Dugald Macfadyen, M.A. (H. R. Allenson, 6s.)*. It is a book dealing with many of the problems our own churches have to face, and in seeking an answer to the question, "How to organise Congregationalism without giving up Congregational principles?" it makes suggestions we shall do well to ponder.

News from the Field.

The Unitarian anniversaries in London were well attended and full of interest. The number of ministers present was exceptionally large; but many leading laymen were absent. The proceedings were of a high level throughout, and were fitly begun by an inspiring service at Little Portland Street, conducted with great ability by *Mr. Gow*. His sermon was aglow with life, and revealed to our people the presence among them of a man of exceptional gifts, both as a thinker and a preacher. The election of *Mr. Armstrong* as President was a fitting testimony to the general appreciation of long and honoured service. But even he will be taxed to keep to the level of efficiency which was reached by *Mr. Odgers, K.C.*

One of the notable features of the proceedings was the meeting where five representative men gave an account of their spiritual and theological pilgrimage from different points of the compass to the position occupied by our churches. The experiences were given with great modesty and self-repression, and revealed to those who could go beneath the surface a degree of sincerity and spiritual fervour which were refreshing and inspiring. These papers ought to be printed in a volume and widely circulated.

It is difficult to single out from a number of significant addresses any that ranked highest—but those that were most impressive to me were *Mrs. Osler's*, *Mr. Armstrong's*, *Mr. Hardy's*, *Mr. Lummis's*, and *Mr. Crooks'*. *Mrs. Osler*, especially by her incisive force and eloquent urgency, laid a spell upon her audience, and made every one wish to see and hear more of her in our various meetings. The deep and impassioned note of sincerity in *Mr. Hardy's* address will never be forgotten by those who heard him.

Altogether the *British and Foreign Association* may be congratulated on having provided a feast of fat things for those who gathered together from all parts of the country.

Similar must be the testimony to the *Sunday School Association*. *Lady O'Hagan* fittingly presided over the opening proceedings. She was both President and Hostess, and in both capacities won golden opinions. The papers read were excellent—notably those of *Mr. Wicksteed* (of Padiham) and *Mrs. Tudor Jones* (of Swansea) The *Association* were able to report satisfactorily about the condition of our schools and the literature provided for their use. Another of the valuable summer school gatherings at Oxford is to be held, and it seems likely that there will be a large and representative body of teachers present.

The week's proceedings at the anniversaries included Postal Mission Work, Temperance Work, Conferences of Teachers, and Meetings of Ministers. All these were interesting and helpful. *Mr. Hodgson Pratt* put some pressing problems before the ministers, but neither he nor they seemed able to find solutions. It is well, however, to know and to face our difficulties—a way out of them will be found ere long.

So the struggle about the *Inquirer* is over at last. The old directors have resigned—and new ones are appointed. It is pleasing to see that after the conflict good feeling remains, and that there is an appeal for, and a promise of, co-operation all round. But the new directors will find a severe task before them. We want an able, lively, and vigourous organ, and we shall look to the new Board for a paper worthy of our people and our cause.

Copies of the new Hymnal published by the *British and Foreign Association* are now to be seen, and I am doubtful whether the new book will prove more acceptable than the one it supplements and succeeds. It is only another of those ventures, of which we have had so many, which reveal the necessity for something better still.

The appeal from Nottingham for a memorial to *Mr. Clayden*, in High Pavement Chapel, is sure to be generously responded to; but, perhaps, a better memorial still would have been to give substantial help to the struggling Church at Boston, where he began his ministry, and in which he continued to be interested to the end of his life.

Mr. Manning and his congregation have mutually agreed to part company at the end of this year. We hope both will benefit, and continue and enlarge their usefulness.

The friends at Park Lane, near Wigan, are doing excellent work, and their new *Shaw Memorial School* will enable them to do more and better. It was pleasing to every one to see the former honoured minister, the *Rev. George Fox*, called upon to lay the foundation stone of the new building.

The *Unitarian Movement* amongst the Students of the *University College of Wales* (Aberystwyth) and a few town residents has been so successful during the past term as to fully warrant our hope for its continuance next October. The series of eight services was brought to an end June 8th, when, under the chairmanship of *Mr. A. Joinson*, a strong committee was appointed to make all arrangements for the coming session.

The *Manchester District Association* are undertaking an admirable piece of work throughout their district. They are arranging regular meetings for the friendly visitation of all their churches in turn, and they have already commenced in a most satisfactory manner. By this means the churches will be drawn into closer fellowship, and made to feel their spiritual kinship. It would be well if this plan could be adopted throughout the country. The Midland district offers a good field for work of this kind.

Is there to be any special work undertaken at Colwyn Bay, or Douglas, or Bangor (Ireland) this season? We must not lose sight of the Isle of Man, or we shall suffer in many ways. We look to the *British and Foreign Association* and the *Missionary Conference* for an answer to these questions, and perhaps these bodies can stir up some one in Ireland to enter upon missionary work.

SCRUTATOR.

June 18th.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

Waiting on God.

Every little child should do what is right, and not do what is wrong. We all agree to that, but perhaps you have never thought how we know to agree to it so quickly; who it is that tells us at once to agree, for we do not need to think about it. It is our Heavenly Father who does this. He tells us what is right for us to do, and of course everything else would be wrong. His presence is in every one, *is in you*, making known His will, so that He is always near, to help you to be good. King Solomon, in one of the books of the Bible, after speaking about his life in every way, says at the end, that after all has been considered, this is the conclusion of the matter, our whole duty in this world is to reverence and obey God. And the prophet Micah, who was a poor man who lived long ago in a small village of Palestine, also says, that our Heavenly Father shows us what is good for us to do, and what He asks of us is that we should do what is right, and be kind, and walk humbly with Him.

Some people say that *to know and obey God* is not easy, but it is strange that they should say so, when they believe that He is almighty, and that He helps us to do what is right. But really it is not hard. As I have said, we are doing it every day, though not as much as we might do, for no one is ever so good as he would like to be. We learn from Jesus that it is easy to obey our Heavenly Father if we are willing to do it, for, standing in his white tunic in the shade, one hot summer day, and speaking to the simple country people of Galilee, gardeners, shepherds, farmers, gathered together up among the hills in their strange bright coloured dresses, He told them so in loving words like these:—

Take My commandments upon you,
And learn from Me;
For I am gentle and lowly in heart,
And you shall find rest.
For My commands are easy,
And My burden is light.

Every little child should pray to God his Heavenly Father, to guide and keep him each day, and help him to be good as He would have him be, for that is the simplest and best way of waiting on Him. You will watch then for His guidance, and obey Him; and if you really wish to do it you will find obedience light, easy, joyful, as Jesus said, doing gladly what is right, and not doing what is wrong. And that is Religion,—that is right doing, that is being good.

We learn much from the Bible about praying to, and waiting on God in this and other ways, from the good men who wrote of the joy and peace of doing so, and of the guidance which they received. David, King of Jerusalem, in his joyous songs says, "Be strong and take courage, wait thou on God!" "Be still before God, and wait patiently for Him." And the prophet Jeremiah, who was the son of a priest of the Golden Temple, in his beautiful poem, called in the Bible his "Lamentations," says that it is good for us to hope, and wait quietly on God, and that He is kind to all that seek Him and wait on Him. And Isaiah, another good man who wrote the greatest poem in the Bible, says that they who wait on God shall grow better and better in doing good.

The Psalms in the Bible are some of them the joyful songs and some the earnest prayers of the good men who wrote them. They were written, it is thought, by King David and his chief musicians, to be sung by men and boys to flutes and silver trumpets, in their great church called the Tabernacle, and by the people in their houses and meeting places, and they tell us of the way in which we should wait on God in words like these:—

Teach me to do Thy will,
For Thou art my God!
Let Thy Spirit lead me
In the way that is right.
Shew me Thy way, O God!
Teach me Thy paths.
Guide me in Thy truth, and teach me;
For thou art the God of my salvation!
On Thee do I wait all the day long.

And that is why churches and chapels are built, and why men speak in them, and why people sing and pray there. They are waiting on God, each after his own manner, that they may be guided in the right way, as I hope you will ever do. And that is why you say your prayers: for in doing so you are waiting on your Heavenly Father, and asking Him to be with you, and with all whom you love. And men find that this waiting can best be done in stillness, not hurriedly, not fretfully, but in quietness and in peaceful confidence and trust in our Heavenly Father. And that is why some people worship God in perfect silence.

Remember, then, that the most precious thing in the world is to know what God your Heavenly Father would have you do, and that you will learn this by praying to Him, and asking Him to make His will known, that you may do it, and that this is ever easy and joyous.

The Happy Thrush.

When Spring, with its sunshine and beauty of bud,
Woke a love in his heart and desire in his voice,
A comrade he found,
Of a velvety round,
Whom he courted and won as the bird of his choice.

There's joy and there's pride in the house in the hedge,
For the eggs of last night are a golden-throat clan;
Five children are born
In the thick of the thorn,
And the voluble thrush is a Family Man.

NORMAN GALE.